

United States District Court
Southern District of Texas
FILED

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

OCT 13 2016

for the

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

United States of America)

v.)

Case No. M-16-1898-M

David J. Bradley, Clerk

Silvestre RICO Jr (USC)
YOB: 1984)

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of 9/12/2016 in the county of Hidalgo in the
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

Offense Description

21 USC 846 (a) (1)

Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to
Distribute Cocaine, approximately 36.9
kilograms, a schedule II controlled
substance.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

(See Attachment I).

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.Approved by David A. Lindemann
P. [Signature] 10/13/16

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 10/13/2016 3:57pmCity and state: McAllen, Texas

[Signature]

Complainant's signature

Christopher Donahue, Special Agent DEA

Printed name and title

[Signature]

Judge's signature

Peter E Ormsby, US Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

ATTACHMENT I

1. In August 2016, DEA McAllen agents received information from Confidential Sources (hereafter CS#1 and CS#2) regarding two drug traffickers known to the CSs as "PAYO" and "PEPE". "PAYO" and "PEPE" were later identified as Jose Abraham SALAZAR-CRUZ aka PAYO (SALAZAR) and Jose Ramon RAMIREZ-TREVINO aka PEPE (RAMIREZ). CS#1 and CS#2 stated that SALAZAR and RAMIREZ are involved in the importation of cocaine from Mexico into the United States via Custom and Border Protection (CBP) ports of entry and coordinate the transportation of cocaine from McAllen, Texas to Atlanta, Georgia.
2. On September 06, 2016, DEA McAllen agents began the consensual monitoring and interception of telephones utilized by CS#1 and CS#2.
3. On September 11, 2016, McAllen DEA agents received information from CS#2 that RAMIREZ and SALAZAR intended to utilize CS#1 and CS#2 to transport approximately thirty four (34) kilograms of cocaine from the Rio Grande Valley area of Texas to the Atlanta, Georgia area for distribution.
4. On September 12, 2016, at approximately 2:36 p.m., during a recorded telephone conversation, SALAZAR and CS#2 ~~planned~~ ^{discussed} the delivery of thirty four (34) kilograms of cocaine by SALAZAR to CS#1 and CS#2. During the conversation, SALAZAR agreed to meet CS#1 and CS#2 at the Academy Sports located at 651 E. Trenton Road, Edinburg, Texas to transfer the cocaine to CS#1 and CS#2.
5. On the same day, at approximately 3:09 p.m., DEA McAllen and Hidalgo County HIDTA agents conducted surveillance of the meeting between CS#1 and SALAZAR at Academy Sports, 651 E. Trenton Road, Edinburg, Texas. During the surveillance, agents observed SALAZAR arrive to the meeting driving a white Ford Ranger displaying Texas license plate GFX2788, registered to Jose Abraham SALAZAR. During the meeting between CS#1 and SALAZAR, SALAZAR transferred a gray plastic bin from SALAZAR's vehicle to CS#1 that contained thirty-four (34) bundles of cocaine. Audio/video surveillance recordings showed SALAZAR watching CS#1 count the thirty-four (34) bundles of cocaine.
6. Agents then observed SALAZAR make a telephone call with SALAZAR's telephone, and subsequently transfer the telephone to CS#1. CS#1 informed agents that SALAZAR had called RAMIREZ to inform RAMIREZ that SALAZAR had transferred the cocaine to CS#1. CS#1 informed agents that CS#1 spoke to RAMIREZ on the telephone and RAMIREZ confirmed with CS#1 that SALAZAR had transferred the cocaine to CS#1.
7. CS#1 was then followed by agents from the meeting location to a secure location in Pharr, Texas where agents seized the thirty-four (34) bundles from CS#1. The thirty-four (34) bundles were found to contain cocaine, weighing approximately 36.9 kilograms.

8. On September 13, 2016, at approximately 3:37 p.m., during a recorded telephone conversation, CS#2 told RAMIREZ that the cocaine was concealed in cargo and being shipped to Atlanta, Georgia. Additionally, during the conversation, RAMIREZ told CS#2 that Silvestre RICO aka "Sobrino" (RICO) had traveled to Atlanta, Georgia from the McAllen, Texas area to establish a stash house and take receipt of the cocaine from CS#1.
9. On September 13, 2016 at approximately 10:07 p.m., during a recorded telephone conversation between RICO and CS#1, CS#1 calls RICO by the name "Sobrino". RICO acknowledges the name "Sobrino". CS#1 told RICO that CS#1 was departing the McAllen, Texas area on September 14, 2016. CS#1 told RICO that the load may arrive on Friday September 16, 2016 in Atlanta, GA. CS#1 and RICO further discussed CS#1's travel plans to get to Atlanta, GA and the means by which CS#1 was transporting the cocaine to Atlanta, GA.
10. On September 14, 2016, at approximately 11:40 a.m., during a recorded telephone conversation, RAMIREZ told CS#1 that RAMIREZ had talked to "Sobrino" (RICO) and that he (RAMIREZ) instructed "Sobrino" (RICO) to give CS#1 the "paperwork" (bulk US currency/ drug proceeds) when CS#1 delivered the cocaine to "Sobrino" (RICO).
11. On September 15, 2016, at approximately 5:03 p.m., during a recorded telephone conversation between RICO and CS#1, RICO arranged to have CS#1 transport and deliver the cocaine to RICO's house.
12. On September 15, 2016, at 6:08 p.m., during a recorded telephone conversation between RICO and CS#1, RICO states to CS#1 that "Pepe" (RAMIREZ) told RICO that CS#1 must deliver the cocaine to RICO's stash house.
13. On September 16, 2016, at approximately 12:29 p.m., during a recorded telephone conversation, RICO stated to CS#1 that RICO will text CS#1 the stash house address and that RICO was trying to hurry and get the bulk currency/drug proceeds ready for transport by CS#1.
14. On September 16, 2016, at approximately 12:34 p.m., CS#1 received a recorded text message from RICO which stated, "1073 flat shoals Rd atlanta, ga, 30349".
15. On September 16, 2016, at approximately 4:09 p.m., during a recorded telephone conversation, RAMIREZ instructed CS#2 to tell CS#1 to contact "Sobrino" (RICO) because the meeting location will change due to "Sobrino" (RICO) observing suspected law enforcement in the area.
16. On September 16, 2016, the Honorable Justin S. Anand, United States Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of Georgia, signed a federal search warrant for the residence and vehicles located at 1073 Flat Shoals Road, Atlanta, GA.

17. On same date, at approximately 5:21 p.m., DEA Atlanta agents, assisted by the Georgia State Patrol executed said search warrant at 1073 Flat Shoals Road, Atlanta, GA. During the search of the residence, agents and officers located and seized \$701,119.00 U.S. currency, one (1) drug accounting ledger, one (1) rifle, and a small amount of personal use marijuana from RICO.